



Voyage in a Square-rigger

1913-1914

Captain A.G. Graham

To Roger Tethow
with best regards
H. J. Barby

1986

COVER ILLUSTRATION: The author, A.G. Graham,
working aloft on the *Lord Templetown*, December 1913.

C.R.M.M. 81.83.2

VOYAGE IN A SQUARE-RIGGER, 1913-1914

by
Captain A.G. Graham

introduction, appendices, and notes by
Larry Duane Gilmore, Editor



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Introduction

Captain A.G. Graham's deep-rooted love of the sea stems not only from a long and active maritime career, which began at age sixteen in the *Lord Templetown* (the subject of this account), but also from a family tradition of seafaring that goes back several generations.

His grandfather, John Graham (1834-1911), was the son of an English seaman. In 1843, at age nine, John stowed away on a square-rigger bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia, in order to escape from an abusive stepmother at Liverpool. When found, he said that he wanted to be a sailor, like his father, and the ship's understanding captain changed his status from that of a stowaway to cabin boy. John Graham was happy at sea and worked his way up to command a vessel while still in his twenties. He married another captain's widow and raised a large family at Hantsport, Nova Scotia. His three sons also acquired seagoing experience during their youth.

One of these sons, Alden B. Graham (1859-1944), migrated to Portland, Oregon in 1879, at age nineteen. He soon perceived the opportunities in the steamboat business and persuaded his father, John, and brothers, Arthur and Newton, to join him in Oregon in 1885. With another partner, they established the Oregon City Transportation Company (the "Yellow Stack Line") to operate light-draft sternwheelers on the Willamette River between Portland and Oregon City. Service was later extended to landings as far upriver as Salem.

Our author, Alden Gerard Graham, was born to the Alden B. Grahams in 1897 at Portland. With such a family background, he naturally grew up with a fascination for ships. When the *Lord Templetown* arrived at Portland in 1913 under the command of a relative, he seized the opportunity to sign on for a voyage to Australia and thence to San Francisco. After its completion, he returned to high school, graduating from Portland Academy in 1916.

A.G. Graham then enrolled in Stanford University, but left college to return to sea in 1917, after the United States entered World War I. He joined the Columbia Pacific Shipping Company of Portland (which later became the States Steamship Company), remaining with this line until 1923, when he obtained his master's license. Graham went back to Stanford a year later and received a law degree there in 1927. He practiced admiralty law in New York City for two years, but found the indoor office routine too tedious to endure and again went to sea in 1929, this time to stay.

During the 1930's, Graham served in a succession of ships with the United Fruit Company, Red D Line, Texas Company, and Grace Line. But in 1938, he took a position as chief mate of the S.S. *Chincha* in the American South African Line (which later became Farrell Lines, Inc.), and his employment by this company was to last twenty-five years. He received his first command, the *Henry S. Grove*, in 1941. Numerous other commands followed; the last was the new cargo liner *African Comet*, with which Graham made record runs from New York City to Cape Town, South Africa and back to Boston in 1962. He was the commodore (senior captain) of the Farrell Lines when he retired in 1963. Captain Graham now resides in Victoria, British Columbia, where he has a view of the harbor and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and can listen over his VHF radio to the tugboat skippers, pilots, and shipmasters talking to each other.

Through the years, Captain Graham developed a flair for writing, initially in the form of unusually detailed letters to his family (copies of a number of them have been donated to the Columbia River Maritime Museum). He later authored a number of lively articles that have graced the pages of such publications as: *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute*, *Sea Breezes*, *Nautical Magazine*, and *Farrell Lines News*. A somewhat shorter version of this account originally appeared as an article in the November 1956 issue of *Yachting Magazine*; the current Editor has graciously granted permission to reprint portions of it in this publication.



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The author as master of the S.S. *African Enterprise*, 1955-60



Portland harbor, circa 1913

University of Oregon / Angelus Collection



The barque *Lord Templetown* (1886-1957)

Ulster Folk & Transport Museum L8272

VOYAGE IN A SQUARE-RIGGER, 1913-14

by
Captain A.G. Graham

Before World War I, when Portland, Oregon and I were younger and life was simpler, I used to wander down to the waterfront after school to watch the square-rigged ships of the various maritime nations loading grain or lumber, or riding at anchor in the river awaiting a berth. Coming from a seafaring family, sailing ships fascinated me, and I longed to be a part of them.

So, when the British bark *Lord Templetown* arrived in port in October 1913, I saw my opportunity. She was commanded by Captain Hiram Davison, a relative of my Nova Scotia-born father, and was to load a full cargo of lumber for Sydney, Australia. During her stay of several weeks in Portland, Captain Davison came to dinner at our house several times, and I visited his ship often and finally obtained his promise to sign me on for the voyage, if I could get my parents' consent.

That was not easy. I was only sixteen, was doing well in my second year in high school (Portland Academy), and my parents didn't want my education interrupted and possibly endangered by my going off to sea. But I pleaded with them day after day and finally overcame their objections by promising to: (1) return to school after completing the voyage and (2) not get tattooed!



The Lord Templetown, October 17, 1915

So, on November 12th, I met Captain Davison at the British Consul's office and signed the ship's articles as an ordinary seaman at two pounds, ten shillings (\$12.50) a month. Thence to my father's dock office at the foot of Taylor Street (telephone, Main 40!), where he and his brother, Arthur, owned and operated the sternwheel river steamboats *Pomona* and *Oregona* on the Willamette River between Portland and Corvallis. Both of them had gone to sea "in sail" from Nova Scotia in their youth, and I needed advice—and some financial assistance—in getting properly equipped for a deep-sea voyage. My father took me in tow and bought me dungaree pants, work shirts, oilskins, sea boots, sheath knife, a "donkey's breakfast" (mattress) and said we would get some blankets from home. Such were the requirements of a sailor in those days. I thanked Dad for his help, and he patted me on the shoulder and confessed that he wished he could set the clock back and go along with me!

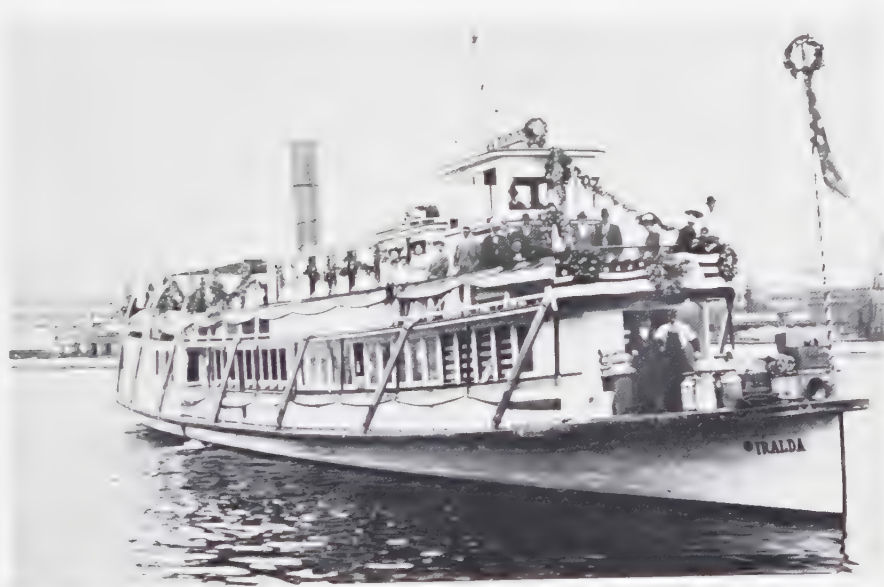
Meanwhile, the *Lord Templetown* had shifted downriver to Prescott, on the Columbia River, to complete her lumber cargo. I joined her there on the thirteenth, making the trip down in style in the pilot house of the river steamer *Iralda* (see Appendix II), whose captain, Charles Hooghkirk, was a friend of my father and uncle. He heartily approved my seafaring venture and showed it by landing the *Iralda* smack alongside the *Lord Templetown* at her lumber dock—a rather unorthodox and dramatic way for a lowly O.S. (ordinary seaman) to join his first ship, but much appreciated by me, burdened as I was by my bulky gear.

Once aboard, I found that I was to live aft in the officers' quarters, viz., the upper berth in the Second Mate's cabin, and eat at the "second table" in the officers' saloon after the Captain and Chief Mate had eaten. In short, I was given the status of a British apprentice (cadet officer), though she carried no apprentice at that time. I would have preferred living in the forecastle with the crew, but the Captain would not permit it. Actually, it worked out well, and I got along fine with both officers and crew, once I got my sea legs and learned my way around.



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A.G. Graham on the *Lord Templetown*'s forecastle deck, Nov. 1913



C R M M / Hosford Collection 65 27 3

The second *Iralda*, decorated for Portland Rose Festival

My first night aboard was a pleasant one. "Misters" Stone and Maxwell, the veteran chief mate and young second mate (you always call them "Mister"), both of whom I knew from my visits aboard in Portland, gave me a friendly welcome, and Mr. Maxwell showed me how to make up my bunk and where to stow my gear. He also gave me some valuable pointers on shipboard etiquette, such as: turn the kerosene lamp down low when not needed, to save oil; open the port at sea only with his permission, to assure dry quarters; stay off the poop deck except when on duty there; and use either of the crew heads forward, but avoid the weather one in a seaway or risk a rear-end dousing! There was much more to learn, but that was a good beginning.



Mr. Stone, Chief Mate (English)
checking the course at the binnacle



Mr. Maxwell, 2nd Mate
(Australian)

The following morning, all hands were turned to at 6:00 a.m. to prepare the ship for sea. The first job was to secure the lumber deckload with chain and wire lashings. During the course of this, one of the younger sailors made a disparaging remark about the way it was being done. Mr. Maxwell heard it, whipped off his jacket, and challenged the sailor to do battle. The latter looked sheepish and refused the challenge, whereupon Mr. Maxwell said (and I still recall his exact words), "Well then, keep your bloody tongue between your teeth after this." This quick show of force to incipient in-

subordination had a salutary effect on the whole crew and was the only threat of violence I saw during my seven months aboard the *Lord Templetown*. Willingness to work, obey orders, and refrain from "lip" were all that was necessary to assure fair treatment. That was my experience and that of the old-time sailors I knew.

Shortly after this episode, Mr. Maxwell, still somewhat ruffled from it, handed me the British red ensign, took me to the flag halliards on the poop, and told me to run the ensign up to the mizzen peak. I thoughtlessly asked which side of the flag was "up" and he exploded! Didn't I know that this flag was known the world over as the only one the sun never set on, and didn't they teach us at school what it looked like? I gulped, ran it up properly, and decided to do as I was told without comment thereafter—a wise move on a square-rigger. Then the Mate (this short title always means the **chief** mate) came by and told me to coil down a long line lying on the deck. I did so while he looked on silently. When I finished, he picked up the coil in disgust and threw it along the deck as before and told me to do it **right**. I pondered over it a moment, not daring to risk another storm by asking questions, then tried coiling it the opposite way—to the right instead of left—and hoped for the best. "That's better," he said. "Coiling a line left-handed will ruin it in time; don't ever do it again." I never did. Their teaching methods were too graphic to forget.

I also learned during this first hour at work that officers off duty and on duty are quite different persons. Incidentally, several crew members witnessed these events and correctly deduced that I would be treated the same as the rest, despite my being quartered aft, and this was a definite help thereafter in my relations with all hands.

Around midmorning, three more A.B.'s (able-bodied seamen) arrived aboard with their gear, escorted and assisted (being a bit unsteady) by a "runner" from Larry Sullivan's infamous Sailor's Boarding House in Portland—more of which anon—whence they were obtained by Captain Davison to complete his crew. They were soon dubbed "the three Yanks," being the only Americans aboard (I wasn't of suffi-

cient importance then to be included!). They were Joe Albrecht, Shorty Evans, and George Christensen, all in their upper twenties. They later proved to be the best sailors aboard and also became my best friends. Evans became our chanteyman, taking the forehand position at the head of any group hauling on a line, and singing out with a peculiar yodeling cry that brought forth the best efforts of the men. George was a talented tattoo artist and spinner of sea yarns, while Joe became the recognized "cock of the fo'c's'le" because of his aggressive, but pleasing, personality and unquestioned fighting ability. All three were widely experienced in sail and took a personal pride in their work.

As in most square-riggers of that time, our crew was a multinational one made up of British, Australians, Scandinavians, Finns (known then as Russian Finns), Germans, Americans, and one Chinaman (the cook). The Captain and Mate were British, and English was the only language tolerated. Also, political arguments were taboo, the reason being to maintain harmony aboard. These rules worked well and were approved both fore and aft.

About 1:00 p.m., the tug *Samson* (see Appendix II) came alongside, put a river pilot aboard, took us in tow, and used her steam pump and fire hose to fill our fresh-water tanks with Columbia River water on the way down the river (a universal practice at that time, when river pollution was negligible). The water had to last us for the voyage. We arrived at Astoria, Oregon after dark and anchored for the night off Tongue Point.



A barque anchored off Tongue Point at Astoria

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Joe Albrecht & Shorty Evans
on the forecastle deck



George Christensen
tattooing a shipmate

CRM / Graham Collection 81 83 13



The tug *Samson* (1898-1945)

CRM / Kern Collection 72 73 34

The following day, Saturday, November 15th, we turned to at the usual 6:00 a.m. to bend (i.e., rig) our mainsail, the biggest of all our sails—some thirty by eighty feet is my guess. It was made of heavy canvas and was brand new, which made it extra stiff and hard to handle. To complicate matters, a cold, driving sleet was coating everything with ice. The sail was sent aloft with a gantline around the bunt (middle), and the fun began.

I was sent aloft with the crew and gingerly worked my way out along the main yard, with nothing between me and the deck, some forty feet below, but the slippery wire footrope to stand on and the yard itself to lean against. Along the top of the yard ran a steel rod, the jackstay, to secure the sail to, and also to hold on to. The sailors' adage when working aloft was, "One hand for the owner and one for yourself!" But with the footrope bobbing up and down as the sailors moved about on it, I got the jitters, forgot the owner, and hung on to the jackstay with both hands for dear life.

Near me on the footrope were the "three Yanks," no longer the semi-derelicts of the day before, but now in their element, busy as beavers, battling the half-frozen, flapping canvas along the ninety-foot yard. Noticing my unco-operative attitude, Joe looked at me sharply, sized up the situation, and said, "Just hang on Kid, you'll be all right." It was good advice, and I followed it for the hour or so it took the crew to finally secure the sail into a somewhat-lumpy, but acceptable, furl along the yard. Whereupon the Mate's cry from the deck, "That's well," ended the job and my first (and worst) experience aloft.

Later, safely back on deck, thawed out, and breakfasted, I was subjected to some good-natured ribbing by both crew and mates. But it dawned on me that this had been my initiation as a deep-water sailor and that I had passed muster, despite my lack of proficiency aloft, simply by "toughing it out"—something respected on sailing ships. I felt the change from then on. I was accepted fore and aft as a green, but willing and worthy, apprentice seaman and was given the advice and help that I needed in learning my trade and earning my two pounds, ten.



C.R.M. / Gibbs Collection 84 1976

The tug *Wallula* (1899-1947)

After lunch, the tug *Wallula* (see Appendix II) brought out the bar pilot, passed us a towing hawser, and we hove up our anchor and towed out over the Columbia River bar, setting one sail after another as we proceeded. Off the lightship we dropped the pilot, let go the tug, and received the customary three-whistle farewell. We were now on our own, with 7,000 miles of ocean between us and our destination, Sydney. The wind was blowing strong from the southwest (our course for Sydney) and we were plunging into a rough head sea, so the Captain ordered the helmsman to steer "by the wind, on the port tack" (i.e., as close into the wind as possible, with the wind on the port bow).

Throughout all this activity, I had been running hither and yon about the deck, following the sailors and hauling on the tail end (the proper spot for juniors) of one line after another, as ordered by the Mate. I was not too sure what we were doing, but was excited and happy to be at sea on a square-rigger at last, fulfilling my dreams. This feeling continued until all was secure, the ship on her offshore course, the lines coiled down, and the watches set. I found myself in the Mate's watch, where I had hoped to be, along with seven A.B.'s, including Joe and Shorty; life was sweet.

But not for long; the motion of the ship bucking into the head sea began to affect my equilibrium, and I became

violently ill, over the lee rail and repeatedly. The Mate, noting my condition, stationed me on the lee side of the poop, a safe spot where he could keep an eye on me while the rest of the watch carried on. All I could do was hang on to the rail, just as I had done on the main yard, and erupt at intervals, paying my initiation dues to Neptune. At eight bells (the end of the watch), I went below and collapsed into my bunk, but four hours later I was roused out and resumed my duties as "lee rail lookout," as the crew called it. This unhappy routine continued for most of the next day and night. As seasickness was not considered a legitimate ailment for a professional seaman, I was not permitted to miss a single watch on deck. By Monday morning, however, the weather having moderated, my stomach and I felt better, and by afternoon I was myself again. This "cold turkey" treatment for seasickness may sound heartless, but it was effective, and I have never been seasick since.

Monday afternoon, the Mate put me to work splitting wood for the galley stove. At this I excelled, as it was one of my chores at home, so he kept me at it till I finished the large pile of wood on the following day. This job brought me in contact with Wong, our Chinese cook, who had been shipwrecked in the British ship *Glenesslin* (see Appendix II) at Neahkahnle,



CRM / Graham Collection 81 28 16

Wong, the *Lord Templetown's* Chinese cook

Oregon on October 1st and had joined our ship two weeks later in Portland. Wong approved my woodcutting ability and rewarded me with tidbits now and then, which my long-empty stomach greatly appreciated, and we became good friends.

But I didn't go to sea to cut wood, so I asked Mr. Stone to please let me go aloft again and learn to be a sailor. He looked me over, then spoke to Joe, who was working nearby, "Albrecht, take this young bloke aloft and show him how to become useful up there. He says he wants to become a sailor."

So up the weather main shrouds I went, following Joe, to the lower topgallant yard, where we went out on the footrope together and he showed me how to make up gaskets (into neat coils hanging from the jackstay ready for use when furling sails) and how to overhaul buntlines by hauling up some slack to prevent their chafing the sail. He had me perform each job several times to be sure I did it properly. Then we returned to the deck, and he assured Mr. Stone of my competency. There being many gaskets and several buntlines on each of our twelve yards to come adrift with the working of the ship in a seaway, seldom would a watch pass without the need of one or more trips aloft for this duty alone—a job normally done by junior crew members, and none was more junior than I. Not that I minded, for my original fear of heights quickly gave way to exhilaration as I gained confidence in working aloft. The views looking down to the activity on deck or off to the far horizons were always a delight to me.

So started my education in seamanship. But I also had to learn the names and functions of the maze of manila and wire ropes that made up the running and standing rigging of our ship—the halliards, sheets, tacks, braces, lifts, clewlines, buntlines, downhauls, shrouds, swifterns, stays, backstays, etc.—and the proper belaying pin or cleat where each item of running rigging was belayed. These you had to be able to locate in the dark quickly and without error before you could be regarded as a sailor. I also devoted a portion of my watches below to standing "lee wheel" with the helmsman on watch and I thereby gradually acquired the art of steering—no easy



The author, A.G. Graham, working aloft, Dec. 1913

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View from the *Lord Templetown's* main lower topgallant yard



Maze of rigging on the *Lord Templetown's* mainmast

CRM / Graham Collection 81 83 5

CRM / Graham Collection 81 83 6

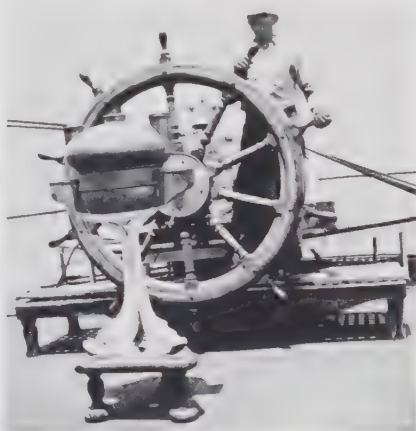
job on a square-rigger, where the vagaries of both sea and wind on the hull and sails had to be constantly met by the helmsman to steer a safe and proper course.

I felt very proud one evening, a couple of weeks later, when the Mate told the helmsman to go forward and have a smoke, while I took his place on the weather grating and steered that big ship by myself for the rest of the watch. It met with the approval of both the Mate and the Captain, who had appeared quietly on the poop, and thereafter I stood my regular trick at the wheel—an achievement also welcomed by the A.B.'s in my watch, as this reduced their number of tricks to stand. Though only a two-hour stint, steering could be both tiring and uncomfortable in bad or cold weather, but I always enjoyed it as sort of an artistic accomplishment.

C.R.M.M. / Graham Collection 81 83 1



Author working on main royal yard



George Christensen, A.B.,
at Lord Templetown's helm

C.R.M.M. / Graham Collection 81 83 14

After a few weeks at sea, I was able to go aloft with confidence, day or night, regardless of wind or sea conditions, to furl a royal (the highest, but smallest square sail) to the Mate's satisfaction or help other hands setting or taking in the larger sails, as well as help brace yards, stand lookout, wield a paintbrush, or perform most of the normal activities required of a seaman in the operation and upkeep of a square-rigger. And I could sense the added confidence of the Captain, officers, and sailors in the quality of my work as the voyage progressed. It was a comfortable feeling.

As for the *Lord Templetown* herself, she was a three-masted bark (or barque, as the British spell it) of 2,048 tons, built at Belfast in 1886 by the firm of Harland and Wolff, which still builds fine ships. She was twenty-seven years old when I joined her, but was in excellent condition and was known as a lucky ship to the sailors. That she was, but it was primarily due to the constant care and expert seamanship of the captains, officers, and seamen who sailed in her over the years. I know that most of us, regardless of nationality, were proud of our ship and of our part in maintaining her reputation. Such loyalty to a ship was common in the days of sail, but is a rarity today.

Our complement consisted of twenty-three men: the Captain, two mates, sixteen seamen (eight in each watch), a carpenter ("Chips"), a sailmaker ("Sails"), the cook, and a steward. Only the mates and seamen stood watch; the others were day workers, though always available for emergency duty, when all hands were required. Our wages, expressed in U.S. money, ranged from \$12.50 a month for an ordinary seaman to about \$150.00 for the Captain; and the monthly payroll for all hands was approximately \$750.00—about what one American O.S. gets per month today. However, our 1913 dollar bought us twenty beers or ten chocolate malts (my choice then), and other goodies in proportion, so our pay, plus free room and board (plain, but adequate), was considered sufficient by the free spirits who followed the sea at that time.



C.R.M.M. / Graham Collection 83.44.2

Part of the *Lord Templetown*'s crew

Working conditions also differed then. At sea, we were divided into two watches (instead of three, as now), known as the port, or mate's, watch and the starboard, or second mate's, watch. The watches alternated, spending four hours on deck and four hours below. This resulted in a twelve-hour (minimum) working day, seven days a week. I say "minimum" because of the occasional necessity of calling all hands on deck for the safe operation of the ship, such as when tacking ship, shortening sail in bad weather, or emergencies of any kind to ship, cargo, or crew. Such additional work was regarded as part of the game and the term "overtime" was unknown in that era.

Such a system may sound unfair, but we never regarded it so. We had little idle time at sea, which was probably just as well. Sleep was the big item of interest when coming off watch, not card playing or such, which would lead to arguments and fights in such confined quarters. But more important was the fact that sailing a ship was, in itself, an interesting occupation, and sailors went to sea in sail for the thrill and adventure it promised—not for the wages, which were always low. That is certainly why I joined the *Lord Templeton* and, once there, I found that I was amid kindred souls of many nationalities. And from this distance in time (sixty odd years), I still regard the seven months I spent on that ship as among the happiest of my life.

On Sundays and holidays, only such work as was necessary for the navigation or safety of the ship was done. There was always a man at the wheel on the poop (a two-hour trick) and, between sunset and sunrise, a lookout on the forecandle head (also two hours). The rest of the watch had to be on deck, handy for any necessary bracing of yards, sail trimming, etc. with the changing of weather conditions, but that was all. This was also true during the night watches. Just what sail trimming, yard bracing, etc. was "necessary," was for the mate on watch to decide (or the Captain, of course, at any time). This was a strong factor in maintaining a well-disciplined crew. Lack of discipline in any crew member could result in much unnecessary work for the entire crew, where-

fore a troublemaker in the forecandle was quickly squelched by the older sailors.

There was a minor ceremony connected with changing the watches at night. At eight bells, both watches would muster near the break of the poop, and the oldest seaman in each watch would report to the Second Mate, "Port watch is aft, Sir," or "Starboard watch is aft, Sir." Whereupon the Second Mate would double check the men and report to the Mate, "Watches are aft, Sir." Then, assuming there was no job requiring all hands, the Mate would order, "Relieve the wheel and lookout,"—a welcome order dismissing the previous watch below. This was routine and woe betide any man who appeared late at muster. Both watches would be kept standing by until he appeared and would probably be given a twenty-minute, "all-hands" job, to boot, as a lesson; his shipmates would see to it that it did not happen again!

This practice of making all hands suffer for the shortcomings of one was constantly employed and was very effective. A sailor broke into the galley one night and stole a pie; we were all kept busy throughout our night watches for a week thereafter. The real discipline then took place in the fo'c's'le (forecandle)—usually a dressing down and a warning by the older hands was sufficient—which was far better than having the officers try to seek out the unknown (to them) culprit to visit their wrath upon.

Watches were changed in the daytime without a muster. The wheel was relieved and the rest of the watch reported to their mate. He assigned them to various duties with orders such as, "Evans, give 'Sails' a hand. Albrecht, you relieve Christensen on the foretops'l yard. The rest of you get on with the painting." The men going off watch did not drop their tools at the stroke of the bell, as is the practice nowadays, but remained working until relieved, explaining to their reliefs exactly what they were doing and how much was left to be done. For a man working aloft, his watch below might be considerably delayed, but that was the time-honored custom in those days, when the job was regarded as more important than personal considerations.

Square-riggers had been in existence for hundreds of years,

and a close approach to perfection had been developed in their operation. There was a fixed or "right" way of doing every detail of every job, and there was a fixed set of social customs governing all relationships aboard. Some of these may sound silly, but they were invaluable in helping to prevent friction between officer and man, or man and man, during the long voyages in sail; and their observance was insisted upon as strongly in the fo'c's'le as it was aft.

The poop deck was the Captain's domain and was forbidden territory to officers and crew alike, except in the line of duty. The weather side of the poop was especially sanctified as the post of command. In the Captain's absence, the mate on watch at night would usually be found there, but the moment the "Old Man" appeared, the mate would move to the lee side. When going to and from the wheel or other duties on the poop, the crew always used the lee ladder.

That area of the main deck between the break of the poop and the mainmast was reserved for the mates' relaxation when off watch, while all forward of the mainmast was crew territory. Smoking by the crew abaft the mainmast was forbidden, and both smoking and conversation were forbidden anywhere while at work (only pipe smoking was indulged in then; cigarettes were considered unmanly). Whistling was taboo for all except the Captain, who exercised this privilege only when he felt it necessary to whistle up a wind. (There is an ancient sailors' superstition that whistling at sea causes winds and storms to occur—Ed.) Singing, shouting, and horse-play were not permitted, except during the second dog watch, the crew's relaxation period, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Except in bad weather, the decks were washed down at the beginning of each day and swept down at the end of the day. When a job was finished, any mess or untidiness was immediately cleaned up, lines coiled down, and tools (if used) put away. The fo'c's'le was kept as clean as the Captain's quarters. Each man had certain hooks for his gear, and the penalty for hanging yours on his was to stand his night trick at the wheel. The youngest seaman in each watch brought the food from the galley at mealtimes and, in return, was taught the finer points of his craft by the older men. No yacht and no



C.R.M.M. / Graham Collection 81.83.18

Seamen holystoning the *Lord Templetown's* poop deck

home was more clean, orderly, and automatically governed by strict rules of right and wrong than a well-run square-rigger. There was a pride of profession and devotion to fine workmanship that made life in sail a much more satisfying calling than was realized by the uninitiated. Only when ashore was a sailor a lost soul; aboard ship he was a man among men, accorded a respect commensurate with his experience, skill, and ability.

Before World War I, deep-water sailors for square-riggers were obtained in Portland, Oregon from Larry Sullivan's Sailors' Boarding House. It had the local reputation of being a shanghai joint, where Sullivan got his guests drunk, robbed them, and shipped them out again, for a fee, before they sobered up. But our three Yanks told me a different story. They said it was like most other hangouts in the various seaports at that time. When you were paid off a ship in a strange port, there was always a runner on hand to welcome and pilot you to the local boarding house, before you drifted off elsewhere. There you found a safe place for your belongings, a bed, good food, and kindred souls from other ships to pass the time with. Drinks were readily available at barroom prices, and your credit was good after your money ran out—up to a month's pay from your next ship. This was paid from the then-legal advance given you (or your creditors) when you signed on for a voyage. Incidentally, this feature, though subject to abuse, did have the advantage of assuring the sailor a job when he needed it most, so it was not all bad.



Larry Mikola Sullivan (circa 1863-1918), "King" of the sailors' boarding house masters in Portland at the turn of the century

In short, Larry Sullivan's (and similar places in other ports) was more like a seaman's club than a boarding house, and it just suited the happy-go-lucky character of the average wind-ship sailor. They realized and joked about being overcharged for their needs, but figured their week or two of freedom to do as they darn pleased, for a change, was well worth it. Also, the alternative to a sailors' boarding house was to easily fall prey to some city slicker in a waterfront bar and end up by losing one's entire voyage pay within an hour or two, via a knockout drop in a drink or other skulduggery from one's newfound "friend." The three Yanks did admit that Sullivan was a tough character, as were his lieutenants, Jack and Pete Grant, and others of his staff. But they had to be tough in that business, not only to keep their frequently boisterous guests in line, but also to fight off any competitors who tried to muscle-in on their local monopoly.

On the debit side of sailing-ship life, I have already mentioned the sleep problem. There was also a food problem. Sailing-ship food was usually described as "plain but wholesome." That it was, but palatable it was not. Being without refrigeration, the normal fare was salt beef (called "salt horse" and "salt junk" by the sailors) or salt pork—both came in casks of brine that actually stank when opened—pea soup, biscuits or bread (often infested with weevils, dead and harmless from baking and completely ignored in time), tinned butter and jam, and various combinations of all these in the form of stews or hash. A Sunday treat was plum duff (pudding) and molasses—very good. Tea and coffee (crew brand, but acceptable) were the beverages. Lime juice was also issued regularly to prevent scurvy.

Fresh fish—dolphin, bonita, albacore, etc.—were frequently caught in fine weather by fishing from the bowsprit with a hook baited with a white rag. As this trailed through the water and then broke the surface with the heave of the ship, it simulated a flying fish to a remarkable and successful degree. These catches provided a delicious and welcome change of diet for all hands and were always shared proportionally fore and aft.



CRM / Graham Collection 81 83 7

Fishing from the *Lord Templetown's* bowsprit

In port, we ate quite well, for fresh meats, vegetables, and fruit were cheaper than salted or canned provisions, and Wong, given proper groceries, proved an excellent cook. A supply of fresh potatoes was always taken to sea and was our last taste of fresh food, while it lasted. As the supply dwindled, a man or two would be sent to help the steward cull out the rotting potatoes from the bins aft—a highly prized job. With our sheath knives, we would slice off pieces of raw potatoes and pop them into our mouths. I can recall the delicious shiver I felt as the potato juice soaked into my gums and innards. When the spuds were gone, we had to fall back on lime juice—never a satisfactory substitute, though apparently an effective one.

The passage from the Columbia River to Sydney took us fifty-three days, a very creditable performance for that time. We sighted no land en route until Norfolk Island, some 800 miles northeast of Sydney—this by the Captain's design, to check his chronometer (set on Greenwich time) for accuracy before closing with the Australian coast. Assured of our correct position, he set a course for Sydney Heads, which we approached early in the morning of January 7, 1914. A tug, cruising off the Heads, came over and towed us into the quarantine anchorage, while we clewed up and furled all our sails.

After passing quarantine, we towed on up past the busy city—an unforgettable trip through one of the most beautiful harbors in the world, full of marine activity of every kind from huge liners to small yachts, surrounded by brick houses with red-tiled roofs and lovely gardens. Circular Quay was the focal point of it all, with ferries going every which way to and from it, like the Ferry Building of old San Francisco. There were no bridges in either city then, and I confess preferring it that way.



Museum of Arts & Sciences Sydney

Circular Quay, Sydney, New South Wales, circa 1900

We anchored in Johnson's Bay, a mile or so beyond Circular Quay, among several other square-riggers discharging lumber, including two from Puget Sound. According to the pilot, one of them had taken 75 days, and the other, 102 days, for the passage, which news put our usually unemotional captain in a rare good humor. He went ashore on the tug, and the Mate got us busy unbending all our sails and stowing them away in the lazarette sail locker for our long stay in port. When the Captain returned in the afternoon, he gave everybody a gold sovereign (a coin worth one pound sterling) as an advance and told the Mate to give the crew shore leave for the rest of the day. Most of them were soon gone, but I remained aboard on the advice of Mr. Maxwell, who offered to take me

ashore the following day and show me the town, "instead of the waterfront bars!"

The following is a letter I wrote to my mother at the time:

This afternoon (Saturday) I went ashore with Mr. Maxwell, the second mate, and he took me all over town. It is a real quaint place. The streets are rather narrow and run in all directions and the buildings are low and old fashioned. It has a "Circular Quay" which corresponds exactly to Frisco's Ferry Building and a main street (George Street) like Market Street only not nearly so wide. There are very few autos but plenty of one-horse hansom cabs with the driver sitting up in back, also wagons, drays, and crowds of people and you have to keep awake crossing the streets. The "trams" are funny little open cars and you can ride anywhere in the city for 1 penny. We had dinner ashore for 1 shilling each which would correspond to a 50¢ meal in Portland. Everybody is friendly and I like the place fine. Oh yes, I also got a raise in pay—£3/10s (\$17.50) from now on!



C R M M / Graham Collection 81 83 11

Lord Templetown anchored in Johnson's Bay (note cockbilled main yard)

It took us five weeks to discharge our lumber cargo of 1,900,000 board feet into lighters while lying at anchor, using longshore labor and our cockbilled main yard for a cargo boom. This was normal procedure and dispatch at that time. The Mate appointed me "captain of the gig," while at anchor, with the duty of rowing the crew members ashore after work and back aboard when I heard them hail, "*Lord Templetown*, ahoy!" from the landing pier several cable's lengths away. The Captain and officers usually took the agent's or stevedores' launch.

My conveyance was our pretty, clinker-built, white-painted work boat, which I was proud of and kept spotless. When not in the boat, I was given light duties on deck—chipping, paint-



N S W Government 2889

The coal dyke at Newcastle, New South Wales in 1906



National Maritime Museum F7 36 425n

The barquentine *Lahaina* with deckload of lumber in 1912

ing, and helping the mates or sailors overhauling ships's gear, etc.—but keeping alert and handy for boat duty at all times. My hours were from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., whereafter the night watchman, an old Welsh sailor called Taffy, relieved me. Taffy could neither read nor write, but was a non-drinking, dependable seaman and a fixture on the *Lord Templetown*. Despite the long hours, my job was pleasant and instructive, and I enjoyed it. Also, I had Saturday afternoons and Sundays off, which I used in sightseeing, ferry rides, swimming at Manly Beach, or just window-shopping around town. Though I have never seen Sydney since those carefree days, I shall always have a soft spot in my heart for it—a unique, charming, and unforgettable city.

On February 12th, we finished discharging, hove up our anchor, and proceeded under tow to Newcastle, sixty miles up the coast from Sydney, to load coal for "Frisco" (as everybody called San Francisco then). We arrived the next morning and joined seven other windjammers moored alongside the ballast berths at Stockton, across the river from Newcastle proper. There we spent the next three weeks, only a few days of which were required for discharging the ballast we had carried in the limbers under our lumber cargo, and the rest awaiting our turn for a berth at the busy coal "dyke" in Newcastle.

The *Lord Templetown*, riding high in water at Stockton ballast berth



C R M M / Graham Collection 81 83 9

Also in port was the American barkentine *Lahaina* (see Appendix II), of San Francisco, whose Captain Carlson was an

old friend of Captain Davison. He was short a second mate and was unable to get one in Newcastle, so Captain Davison recommended Joe Albrecht for the job. Joe left us the following day, with mixed emotions shared by all—glad to see him promoted, but sorry to lose a good shipmate. She sailed a couple of days later, arrived in San Francisco well ahead of us, and I never saw Joe again. A fine friend, gone but not forgotten; but such is the way of the sea.

Eventually we got a berth at the coal dyke, whereafter our coal cargo was dumped into our holds day and night until we were down to our Plimsoll marks and the coal was trimmed to the Mate's satisfaction—all this by shore labor. It took them only two days. Then we shifted to the "farewell buoy" to wash the ship and ourselves clean of the coal dust we had accumulated from stem to gudgeon. This done, we roused out all our sails from the lazarette and bent them to their respective yards and stays. The wind being fair, we figured to be on our way to "Californ-i-o" by supper time. Mr. Stone, however, was skeptical. He reminded me that it was Friday the 13th and he doubted that Captain Davison would risk sailing on "such a bloody inauspicious day." Sure enough, when the Captain returned from clearing the ship at the Custom House, he told Mr. Stone that he had ordered the tug for 6:00 the following morning and to be ready to sail then. And that we did, on Saturday, March 14, 1914, a month and a day after arriving at Newcastle.

The passage from Newcastle to San Francisco took us ninety-nine days! This was primarily because of the northeast trade wind, which was a fair wind for us outbound, but a head wind homeward bound (the southeast trades were beam winds for us both ways). The other reason was because we had a foul bottom on the homeward passage, instead of the clean bottom we had when we left our fresh-water loading ports on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. Barnacles cannot live in fresh water, but attach themselves and grow rapidly on ships' hulls in salt-water harbors. I still recall my astonishment on seeing the mass of barnacles that had accumulated in five weeks on the bottom of my otherwise-pretty work boat, when we hove it aboard before sailing from Syd-

ney. Incidentally, the difference between our outward and homeward passages was forty-six days, a good example of the comparative unreliability of sail power versus engine power in ocean transportation.

Actually, the passage did not seem that long. The two-watch system, four hours on duty and four off, left little time for reflection or complaints. Sometimes, when turning out for night watches after only three and one-half hours of sleep, a bit bleary-eyed and slow-moving, the Mate would tell us that we were "poisoned with sleep" and have us take a good pull on the braces, whether needed or not—an effective antidote for our malady. Both mates, through sheer pride of position, always forced themselves to show on deck wide-awake and alert, though their hours were the same as ours. The Captain, who always appeared instantly when anything went wrong, was reputedly a non-sleeper!

Early Sunday, June 21, 1914,* we made our U.S. landfall, Point Reyes, California, some forty miles northwest of San Francisco. We headed for the San Francisco pilot boat, picked up our pilot around noon, and, with a fresh westerly breeze, squared away for the Golden Gate. A Red Stack tug intercepted us and offered to tow us in, but Captain Davison thanked the tug's captain and told him that we would sail in, the wind being fair and the visibility good—and this we did.

**Red Stack tug, photographed
from the *Lord Templetown***



C.R.M.M. / Graham Collection 81.83.17

*Newspaper accounts and records of the San Francisco Marine Exchange indicate that the *Lord Templetown* arrived on June 20. Perhaps crossing the International Dateline caused an error in the author's reckoning—Ed.

I stood lee wheel with Shorty Evans during the operation, and what a grand experience it was. The Captain and pilot stood at the break of the poop on opposite sides, the pilot giving the helm orders and the Captain signalling the Mate, on the main deck with the crew, what sails to take in, one after another, as we sailed through the Golden Gate into San Francisco Bay. We were watched by thousands of San Franciscans from both shores and the ships, ferries, and yachts that we passed on that lovely afternoon in June. Watching a square-rigger **sail** into port and anchor without help was a rare sight, even back in 1914. A Sausalito ferry veered from her course to get a better look at us and gave us a three-whistle salute, while her passengers waved and cheered. We were too busy to dip our flag in reply, but Evans, alongside of me on the wheel grating, responded with an exultant yodel that "brought down the house" on both vessels and elicited broad grins from our captain and pilot.



British ship drying her sails at anchor off Alcatraz Island, circa 1905

Off Alcatraz Island, we rounded to, let go our weather anchor, and brought up. Then, all hands up the ratlines with a rush and out on the yards, for the last time, to give a harbor furl to all our canvas—with all of us full of joy over the successful termination of our long voyage and the warm welcome from our San Francisco audience. It was truly a day to remember.



CRM / Graham Collection 81 83 12

Deck of the *Lord Templetown*, anchored in San Francisco Bay

The following day was my last aboard the dear old *Lord Templetown*. I said goodbye to her and all my shipmates and went ashore with the Captain in the agent's launch. Our first stop was a barber shop on lower Market Street for a much-needed haircut for us both (his treat), then to the British Consulate, where I was paid off with some sixty dollars (then an all-time financial high for me).

I thanked Captain Davison for a wonderful experience, and he complimented me, for the first time, on my conduct and ability during the voyage and promised to confirm this by letter to my parents. A fine man and an ideal shipmaster was Captain Hiram Davison of Hantsport, Nova Scotia. I learned a lot by having sailed with him and have always treasured my memories of my seafaring apprenticeship on the *Lord Templetown* under his command.

I can only add that I arrived home a few days later un-tattooed and finished my schooling, as I had promised; but I did not "get it out of my system." I spent most of my active life thereafter at sea—though on steamships, perforce—and I can best explain why in the following verse, which I read in some forgotten magazine many years ago:

THE SEA'S LOVER

by
Elspeth*

He was hers. He was caught.
She had him first;
Giving him food for his thought,
For his soul, thirst.

Giving him hunger of heart
For the earth's rim;
Making a sweet life apart
For herself and him.

Teaching him how to be kind,
She, the cruel and ruthless;
Teaching him honor of mind
Who herself was so truthless.

He was hers and he shall be
Till his long trick is over.
That is the way of the sea
And the Sea's Lover.

THE END

*Elspeth MacDuffie Bragdon, born 1897

APPENDIX I:

History of the Lord Templetown

The big square-rigger *Lord Templetown* was ordered by the Irish Shipowners' Company, under the management of Thomas Dixon and Sons. She was built at Belfast, Northern Ireland by the Harland and Wolff shipyard, which launched her on May 5, 1886. Originally a full-rigged, iron-and-steel ship, she was later altered to a three-masted barque. The ship was 282.9 feet long, with a breadth of 40.1 feet, and a depth in hold of 23.7 feet; she was registered at 2,152 gross tons and 2,048 net tons. The quality of her construction earned Lloyd's of London's highest insurance classification and she was kept in top condition during her service in the "Lord Line" of the Irish Shipowners' Company.

Captain Robert Hawthorne was in command when the *Lord Templetown* first sailed from Belfast on June 12, 1886. She engaged in hauling bulk cargoes in North American commerce, especially the California grain trade.

A tragic incident occurred in 1893 while the *Lord Templetown* was bound from London to Philadelphia with six passengers, a crew of thirty-four, and a cargo of chalk aboard. A strong gale was encountered as she approached the Newfoundland Banks. Sixteen men were aloft goose-winging* the lower main topsail when the yard's truss snapped, letting the yard drop several feet, until stopped by its tie (or sling). The Third Mate, Boatswain, and seven hands were thrown overboard and drowned. Others fell to the deck, killing one instantly and badly injuring two more.

The *Lord Templetown* was compelled to run before the wind for two days after the accident; a week was then spent repairing damage. Captain Hawthorne intended to proceed to Philadelphia, but his crew refused to continue the voyage, and he had to put back to Queenstown, Ireland. A subsequent official inquiry found, "...the vessel was navigated in a proper manner and no blame was attached to the master or officers."

Eschen and Minor of San Francisco negotiated the purchase of the *Lord Templetown* in 1898 for 11,000 pounds sterling. This firm managed the vessel, but had her registered at Victoria, British Columbia under the nominal ownership of R.P. Rithet and Company. She arrived at Portland, Oregon on April 13, 1900, one hundred sixty-seven days out from Newcastle-on-Tyne. This was during the Boer War, so the *Lord Templetown* was soon sent to Cape Town, South Africa with a cargo of pine and redwood.

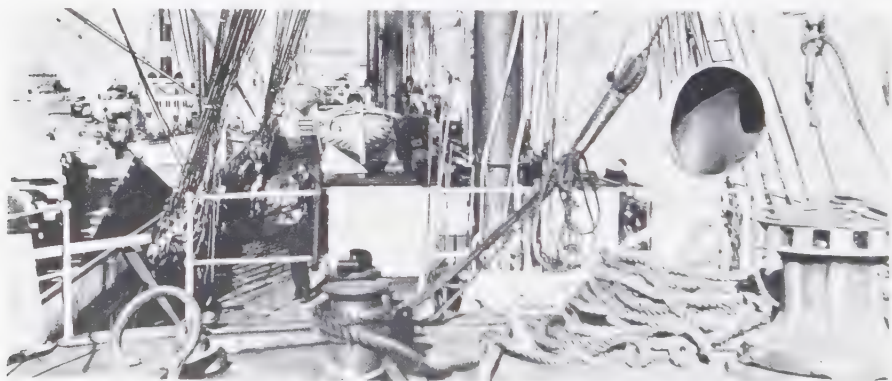
* A square sail was goose-winged to minimize the risk of it ripping out in high winds. The close-reefed sail was hauled up to its yard in the middle, leaving the weather clew or both clews (lower corners) sheeted home, thus exposing only small triangular areas of canvas to the wind.



The *Lord Templetown* at sea during her later career

The *Lord Templetown* was steadily engaged in Pacific trade until 1921, when she was laid up at Oakland, California after arriving with a cargo of nitrates from Iquique, Chile. She was acquired by the Coastwise Steamship and Barge Company in 1924 and was converted in the following year, at Vancouver, B.C., to a barge for the coal and ore traffic between British Columbia and Puget Sound. Eventually laid up again at Victoria, the *Lord Templetown* was sold in 1935 to H.B. Elworthy's Island Tug and Barge Company. She was employed in hauling logs from Vancouver Island to pulp mills.

In 1956, the *Lord Templetown* was sold to the Zidell Company, which scrapped her the next year at Portland, Oregon. Some fifty relics of the old sailing vessel, including her steering wheel box were saved and placed in the collection of the National Maritime Museum at San Francisco.



View aft along *Lord Templetown*'s deck, at Victoria, B.C.



Vancouver B.C. Press (Photo, 1962)

The barque *Lord Templetown* loading lumber

APPENDIX II: *Notes on Vessels Discussed in the Text*

1. *Glenesslin* - British iron, full-rigged ship: 1,818 gross tons, 260 feet long.

The *Glenesslin* was launched by T. Royden and Sons at Liverpool in 1885. She was owned by C.E. DeWolf and Company. The *Glenesslin* sailed straight onto the rocks at the base of Neahkahnie Mountain, Oregon on October 1, 1913, while bound in ballast for the Columbia River. A subsequent naval court of inquiry reprimanded First Mate Howarth and temporarily suspended Captain Williams and Second Mate Colefield for negligence.



The *Glenesslin* on the rocks at Neahkahnie Mountain, 1913

2. *Iralda* - U.S. wooden, propeller steamer: 99 gross tons - 106.2 feet x 18.7 feet. 130 I.H.P., triple-expansion engine. Crew: four.

Captain W.S. Neusome's second *Iralda* was built at Portland, Oregon in 1906 using components of the first *Iralda*. She was a fast riverboat for passenger and freight service. Her original route was down the Columbia River from Portland to Rainier, Oregon and back by way of Willamette Slough, collecting milk and other dairy products for Portland markets. In her later years the *Iralda* was owned by the Hosford Transportation Company, and her route was extended to Astoria. As late as 1921, she engaged in a rate war that drove the Portland-Astoria fare down to \$1.00. The light, narrow *Iralda* was not a success on the often rough estuary of the Columbia and was withdrawn from the route. She was abandoned in 1932.

3. *Lahaina* - U.S. wooden, four-masted barquentine: 1,067 gross tons, 217 feet x 42 feet. Crew: thirteen.

The *Lahaina*, named for the old whaling town on the Hawaiian island of Maui, was built by W.A. Boole and Son at Oakland, California in 1901 for Hind, Rolph and Company of San Francisco. She was wrecked at Point Vicente, California on October 5, 1933.

4. *Samson* - U.S. wooden, steam tug: 279 gross tons, 110.4 feet x 25.4 feet. 219 N.H.P., compound engine. Crew: twelve.

The *Samson* was built for the Columbia Contract Company at Portland, Oregon in 1898 by Wolff and Zwicker. She was later owned successively by the Umpqua Transportation Company and the Samson Towing Company. She was acquired by the Ship Owners and Merchants Tugboat Company of San Francisco (the Red Stack Line) about 1935 and was renamed *Reliance*. She foundered in San Francisco Bay on December 17, 1945.

5. *Wallula* - U.S. steel, steam tug: 167 gross tons, 99.6 feet x 22.7 feet. 550 H.P., compound engine. Crew: ten.

The *Wallula* was built as a bar tug, to tow sailing vessels over the Columbia River bar, for the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company in 1899 at San Francisco. She figured in many rescue and salvage efforts. The *Wallula* was sold to the Port of Portland in 1909. In 1912, three of her crew boarded the drifting, abandoned schooner *Admiral* to secure a tow-line. The schooner capsized while being towed over the bar, but the men scrambled out onto her side and were picked up by another boat from the *Wallula*. Another time, while crossing the bar on October 10, 1912, the *Wallula* was completely engulfed by a huge wave that threw her on her side, swept away all her boats and davits, and damaged her superstructure. She was sold to the Hammond Lumber Company in 1912 and again, about 1924, to the Humboldt Stevedore Company, which registered her at Eureka, California under the name *Humboldt*. The Ship Owners and Merchants Tugboat Company of San Francisco bought her around 1938 to join their Red Stack Line as the *Sea Queen*. She was scrapped in 1947.

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